

AN
HUMBLE ATTEMPT
TO ILLUSTRATE
THE CHARACTER AND OBLIGATIONS
OF A
MINISTER OF THE GOSPEL OF CHRIST ;
IN A
SERMON,

PREACHED BEFORE THE PRESBYTERY OF FAYETTEVILLE, ON FRIDAY THE 30TH
DAY OF JULY, 1819. IN THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF
FAYETTEVILLE NORTH-CAROLINA,

AT THE ORDINATION OF
THE REV'D. WILLIAM D. SNODGRASS :
TOGETHER WITH
THE CHARGES

DELIVERED ON THAT SOLEMN OCCASION :

BY THE REV'D. COLIN M'IVER.

PUBLISHED BY REQUEST.

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PREFACE.

TO illustrate the importance of the subject treated of in the following sheets, no prefatory remarks are necessary. One part of the Sermon here presented to the public, has this for its special object. If the reader should be disposed to inquire, why a subject, on which so many excellent treatises, in the form of Sermons and charges have already been published, should again be obtruded, in a similar form, on the public attention, the answer is, that the following Sermon and Charges, like all similar Sermons and Charges which have preceded them, were called forth, by an important occasion ; namely, the ordination of a Minister of the Gospel ; and that the hope of their being found useful to those most immediately interested in this transaction, has induced the author to consent to their publication. For the information of those who are not acquainted with the manner in which Ordinations are generally conducted in the Presbyterian Church, the following extract from the Minutes of the Presbytery of Fayetteville, is submitted to the reader.

“ Fayetteville, Friday 30th July, 1819.

“ Agreeably to a resolution passed on yesterday, Presbytery
“ proceeded to ordain and instal The Rev'd. WILLIAM D.
“ SNODGRASS, in the following manner. A sermon, adapt-
“ ed to the occasion, was preached by The Rev'd Colin M'Iver,
“ in which a view was given to the auditory, of the character
“ and obligations of a Minister of Christ. Sermon being ended,
“ the proceedings of Presbytery preparatory to this trans-
“ action, were briefly recited from the pulpit in the audience
“ of the people : the nature and importance of the Ordinance
“ was then pointed out ;—that the audience might be impress-
“ ed with a proper sense of the solemnity of the transaction.
“ Mr. Snodgrass having then signified his unqualified assent to
“ those engagements required in our book of discipline, pre-
“ paratory to Ordination ; and his people having also come un-
“ der corresponding obligations ; he knelt down, in a conveni-
“ ent place ; and was by prayer, and the laying on of the hands
“ of the Presbytery, according to Apostolic example, solemnly
“ ordained to the Holy Office of the Gospel Ministry. Prayer

“ being ended, The Rev’d. William D. Snodgrass arose from
 “ his knees ; and the presiding Bishop, first, and afterwards all
 “ the members of Presbytery in their order, took him by the
 “ right hand, saying DEAR BROTHER,—WITH CORDIAL AND UN-
 “ FEIGNED PLEASURE, WE GIVE YOU THE RIGHT HAND OF FEL-
 “ LOWSHIP. TO TAKE PART OF THIS MINISTRY WITH US. A so-
 “ lemn charge, in the name of God, was then given, by the
 “ presiding bishop, to the newly ordained Bishop and to his
 “ people, to persevere in the discharge of their mutual duties ;
 “ and afterwards, by prayer, they were both recommended to
 “ to the grace of God, and his Holy-keeping ; and finally, after
 “ singing a Psalm, the people were dismissed with the usual be-
 “ nediction ;— after which, the Ruling Elders of the Church,
 “ and the heads of families belonging to the congregation,
 “ came forward to their Pastor, and gave him their right hand,
 “ in token of cordial reception and affectionate regard.”

The author has nothing further to add, but, that he sends
 the following sheets into the world, accompanied by his fervent
 prayer, to the author of all goodness, that his Divine blessing
 may accompany this feeble effort of one who accounts himself
 less than the least of all saints,

A SERMON,

2ND TIMOTHY, iv. 5.—“*Make full proof of thy Ministry.*”

THESE words are a part of a solemn charge, which Paul, the great Apostle of the Gentiles, addressed to Timothy, his beloved son in the Ministry of Christ's Gospel. Both the Epistles which the inspired Apostle wrote to this his young companion and assistant in the Ministerial Office, and that which he wrote to Titus who sustained the same character, are filled with exhortations which afford a striking view of the importance of the Gospel Ministry ; and of his own earnest, anxious, and longing desire, that all the duties attached to this sacred office, should, by those to whom it was especially entrusted, be well understood and faithfully fulfilled. But the charge, from which the exhortation in our text is taken, was given to Timothy under circumstances peculiarly solemn, and well calculated to engage him, to renewed zeal and increased fidelity. The Holy Apostle, at the time in which he gave this charge, had, by a prophetic Spirit, a full prospect before him, alike, of those severe trials to which Timothy was shortly to be exposed, and of that violent death to which he was himself soon to be subjected. For his own personal sufferings, of which he had such near views ; and for his departure from this world, which was immediately to follow, he felt himself fully prepared ; and he even rejoiced in the prospect of his approaching dissolution : yet, such was his concern for the interest of his Redeemer's Kingdom on earth,—such his regard for Timothy, to whom much of this interest was yet for a time to be entrusted,—and such his godly jealousy over him, lest persecution or affliction should betray him into forgetfulness of his duty to the Lord Jesus, that he solemnly charged him, as in the immediate presence of the righteous judge of the whole earth, to persevere unto the end, in the faithful exercise of all his Ministerial duties. “*I charge thee, therefore,*” said the in-

spired Apostle, “before God and the Lord Jesus Christ, “who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing “and his kingdom ; preach the word ; be instant in season, out of season ; reprove, rebuke, exhort, with all “long-suffering and doctrine. For the time will come, “when they will not endure sound doctrine ; but after their “own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears ; and they shall turn away their ears “from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables. But “watch thou in all things, endure afflictions, do the work “of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry.” Having in this solemn manner, pressed these weighty exhortations on his young son in the ministry, the Apostle further urges him to fidelity, by the affecting consideration, that he was no longer to enjoy the benefit of his instructions ; and that it now became him, by daily and increasing engagedness in the great work to which he had devoted himself, to aspire after that glorious reward, which his illustrious leader now had in immediate and joyful anticipation. “For I am now,” continued this holy man of God, “ready to be offered ; and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith : henceforth, there “is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the “Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day : “and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his “appearing.” Under these solemn, interesting, and affecting circumstances, the Apostle Paul addressed to Timothy the solemn charge which you have heard ; and wherein he exhorts him,—to “preach the word ;”—to “be instant in season, out of season ;”—to “reprove, rebuke,” and “exhort, with all long-suffering and doctrine ;”—to “watch in all things ;”—to “endure afflictions”—to “do the work of an Evangelist ;”—and to “make full proof of” his “ministry.” Of the last of these exhortations, to-wit, “make full proof of thy ministry,” I have made choice, as the subject of our present meditations ; as it evidently includes every thing implied in all the other exhortations which immediately precede it.” “Make full proof of thy ministry.”

In the further illustration of these words, I shall en-

deavour, in humble reliance on Divine Grace, **FIRST**, To state, by what means, a Minister of the Gospel should make full proof of his ministry ; and, **SECONDLY**, To shew the importance of maintaining such a walk and conversation, as is here required of the Ministers of Christ. In discoursing on these particulars, I am sensible, that, in a different situation, it would be much more becoming in me, and indeed I would much rather chuse, to hear and learn my duty from my Reverend Fathers and Brethren who are here present, than to pretend to teach them theirs : it is only to perform the part which arises from the province now assigned me, that I would, with all humility, lay before them, that idea of the character and obligations of a Minister of the Gospel of Christ, which I wish, however defective or faulty, to inculcate on myself.

FIRST, then, I proposed to state, by what means, a Minister of the Gospel, should “ make full proof of ” his, “ ministry.”

The first thing I would mention, as essential to such proof, is, that a Minister of the Gospel, should exhibit, in the sight of men, a conduct directed by the laws of that religion which he preaches to the world. That, without maintaining such a conduct, the true character of a Gospel Minister cannot be exemplified, the least reflection must convince you. This is a truth which is fully supported, not only by what our daily observation may teach us, but also, by the express language of the Holy Scriptures. Human nature is so corrupted and depraved, that even when the excellency of the Gospel of Christ is amiably illustrated in the pious and holy walk of those who preach it, it is, alas ! in too many instances, slighted and disregarded ;—but, when he who is called to be a Teacher of Sacred Truth, misleads, by his example, those to whom he should be a safe guide ; when a minister sustains two opposite characters, whilst engaged in performing the services of the sanctuary, and during his ordinary intercourse with the world ;—when, in his public preaching, he urges obedience to the precepts of Christ ; and yet, by his daily conduct, does himself withhold that obedience ;—in place of diminishing the existing evil, he renders it more extensive ; and, as far as his influence ex-

tends, he defeats the very object of the Gospel Ministry ; namely, the reformation, and salvation of those, to whom the Gospel is preached. Should he preach the truths of the Gospel, ever so pointedly and faithfully ;—should he urge them, with ever so much zeal and ardour, and by the most sacred and solemn considerations ;—yet, if, in his own life, he exhibit a conduct, opposite to that, which, in his public instructions, he recommends to others, he furnishes all who perceive this, with abundant reason to conclude, that he is not, himself, a sincere believer in those doctrines which he urges others to embrace. Hence, the Apostle Paul exhorts Timothy, to “ *be an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity :*” and, in his Epistle to the Romans, he clearly shews, that, when public teachers are themselves guilty of those offences for which they reprove others, they defeat the very end of their office. “ *Therefore,*” said he, “ *thou art inexcusable, O man, who-soever thou art that judgest : for, wherein thou judgest another, thou condemnest thyself, for thou that judgest, doest the same things.—Thou, therefore, which teachest another, teachest thou not thyself ? Thou that preachest a man should not steal, dost thou steal ? Thou that sayest a man should not commit adultery, dost thou commit adultery ? Thou that abhorrest idols, dost thou commit sacrilege ? Thou that makest thy boast of the law, thro’ breaking the law, dishonourest thou God ? For the name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles through you as it is written.*” Thus, you see, Brethren, how essential is the good and holy example of a Gospel Minister, to the success of his labours.

But in order that a Minister of Christ may “ *make full proof of*” his “ *ministry,*” it is not sufficient, that he should *merely* exhibit, *in the sight of men*, a conduct directed by the laws of that religion which he preaches to the world : it is, moreover, necessary, that he should regulate that conduct in such a manner as will clearly shew, that the secret springs and motives which govern him, are directed by the Gospel ; and that the outward regularity and virtue of his life, naturally express the sentiments and temper of his heart. There are two dif-

ferent characters which every man sustains ; to-wit.—the character which he has with men, or the reputation which is given him by the world ; and the character which he has with God, or the place which he holds in his esteem. The first of these, arises from his visible deportment in society ;—the second, not from that alone, but from that, in its connection with the principles and dispositions of his heart. This distinction runs through the whole of the sacred scriptures. It is expressly made, by the author of our text, in his Epistle to the Romans. “ *He is not a Jew who is one outwardly ;—but he is a Jew, who is one inwardly, whose praise is not of men, but of God.*” The Gospel of Christ is evidently designed to purify the dispositions of the heart of man, as well as to direct the measures of his life. In order, then, to “ *make full proof of*” his “ *ministry,*” a Minister of the Gospel must feel the power of that internal piety which the Gospel was intended and is fitted to produce in the heart of every man by whom it is believed ; and, from thence, he must exhibit to the world, the example of a virtuous and holy life. This internal piety must spread its influence through the whole of his deportment ; but it must, in a more especial manner, enter into the sacred and peculiar functions of his Ministry. In these, he ought to be awakened to an affectionate and feeling sense of sacred things, and to be conscious of that influence in himself, which it is the purpose of his several ministrations to promote in the minds of men. When, for instance, he conducts the worship of a Christian Assembly, and expresses, in their name, that homage of the heart with which they ought to worship God, he ought, then, to feel the power of that internal homage in himself, and speak only what proceeds from the genuine impressions of his own heart. When, preaching to a Christian Assembly, he would lead his hearers to a suitable idea and impression of eternal things, he should, himself, then, be filled with the Heavenly impression ; and draw from thence, the descriptions and enforcements he sets before them. In a word, in every sacred ministration in which he is employed, he must study to become, in the real sentiments and dispositions of his heart, and in the eye of God, who

sees the heart, what he outwardly appears to be, what he wishes to be reputed in the public eye, and what it is the professed intention of his sacred ministrations to promote among mankind. To be thus directed and disposed, in the duties of the ministry, is, I apprehend, the proper and full signification of the Apostle's injunction in the words of our text : "*make full proof of thy ministry.*"

Suffer me now to call your attention, as was proposed, in the SECOND place, to the importance of maintaining such a walk and conversation, as is here required of the Ministers of Christ.

And the first light in which I would consider it is, *in point of duty and sincerity*. Besides the general obligations to religion and morality, incumbent upon every man, there are special obligations which arise from men's particular profession in society. When they act suitably to these, their character is generally marked with honour and esteem ; but when they depart from or violate them, their character is generally marked with dishonour and contempt. In like manner, in the particular profession of a Gospel Minister, that internal piety which the Gospel was intended to promote, is essential to the propriety and virtue of his character. By the nature of his office, he must assume the outward form of piety : nay, he must assume it often, in the immediate presence of his maker ; and, with an air of importance and solemnity, express before him, the effusions of a heart devoted to his service. If, nevertheless, there is nothing corresponding with this outward form in the real state and temper of his soul, a greater impropriety in manners cannot be conceived of : it is, indeed, more than impropriety :—it is falshood and insincerity :—for what can be a greater, or more odious insincerity, than, with a serious and solemn air, to counterfeit a character, of which we are not really possessed ; and that, not only in the sight of men, but, in the immediate eye of God ;—nay, under the disguise of an immediate address to his adorable majesty ?—This counterfeited character, withal, must be maintained through the daily business of life ; whence, it will be very difficult for such a man to preserve a suit-

able regard to candour and sincerity, in any instance of his conduct. The Clergy have been long reproached, as prone to betray a peculiar strain of slyness and hypocrisy, in their conduct with the world. I hope this censure has been pronounced on them, much oftener, and with much more severity, than they have deserved. But if, at any time, the censure has been just, what has been observed may lead us to a natural explication of this peculiarity. A studied and deliberate hypocrisy, in the sacred functions of the Ministry, i. e. in the most serious and solemn parts of human life, will, insensibly, root out every principle of candour from the heart; and, by a natural transition, mix itself in every other circumstance of life. It ought, here, however, to be remarked, that this affords no just reflection against the Ministerial office; but only against the man by whom it is abused: nay, he who, in the way which I have endeavoured to point out to you, is qualified for his office, will, from that unseen and accurate sincerity which he studies to observe in the functions of his Ministry, natively improve his sense of candour and sincerity, in every other action of his life. While, therefore, the dishonest clergyman, is, indeed, the likeliest of all other men, to become thoroughly acquainted with the arts of imposture and disguise; yet, he who is sincere in his profession, is as likely to become a man of the most delicate integrity, in every part of life. From these few remarks, it may appear, how very important, *in point of duty and sincerity*, it is, that a Minister of the Gospel should “*make full proof of his ministry*.” If he do not, he does not only act an inconsistent and improper part; but is truly, in the sight of God, an insincere and worthless hypocrite; and, could he candidly reflect upon his own conduct, he would see himself in the same contemptible and odious light.

But, the importance of a Minister’s maintaining such a holy and exemplary life, may be further seen, if we consider it, *in the view of its utility and advantage to the world*. In this way alone, can he set before the world a suitable example. Here, it will, at once occur to you, that the good example of a Minister is highly requisite, to add authority and weight to his instructions; and,

that an opposite example will not only weaken and destroy this authority ; but, in the thoughts of many, will furnish an apology for, and give a kind of opposite authority to wickedness. The undistinguishing, which is by far the greatest part of mankind, will be hereby tempted to believe, that religion is nothing, at the bottom, but a fabulous imposture ; or, at least, an agreeable and specious theory, fit for the teachers of religion to display ; but unfit for the business and practice of the world. But, besides this, the good example of a minister which is fitted to give weight to his instructions, must immediately proceed from the piety and goodness of his heart ; and be the natural expression of what he feels, or is conscious of, within himself. Like the good man whom our Saviour describes, he must “ *bring forth his good things, from the good treasure of his heart.*” From prudence, or a sense of decency, a Minister may so adjust the measures of his conduct, and guard all appearances before the world, as to be exempted from reproach ; and thus, he may avoid the danger of corrupting others by the force of his example. This, however, is far short of what is requisite, not only in point of *candour* and *sincerity*, but, in point of *usefulness*, and, in order to promote the ends of his profession. There is a peculiar degree of abstraction from the vanities and vices of the world, and a peculiar pitch of eminence in the virtues of the christian life, which is expected by the world from, and is indeed implied in the profession of a Gospel Minister. That habitual attention which it calls upon him to bestow on Spiritual and Heavenly things, ought, natively, to raise him to this peculiar excellence ; and a Minister of Christ, to do justice to society, should labour to acquire, not only a superior knowledge of religious truth, but also a superior experience of its purifying power upon the heart ; and from thence assist the rest of mankind, to surmount those opposite impressions from the world, to which they are laid open from their different situation. In no other way, however, can such a distinguished excellence and virtue be expressed in a Minister’s example, than by his being qualified for the duties of his function in the manner which has just been described. Prudence or atten-

tion to the opinion of the world, may lead a man to imitate this character ; but the copy will be easily distinguished from the true original, by every deserning eye. Those artificial and affected principles, will either leave the man by whom they are assumed in a state of spiritless indifference ; or, they will betray him into an unnatural ostentation and excess. There is always something natural and open in the conduct of an honest man ; and a freedom and simplicity in his manners, which cannot be expressed, but when it comes immediately and freely from the heart. This, now, is the example which a Minister is called to set before the world ; and by which he is to season and support the instructions which he gives : and this, indeed, will give him a peculiar authority. Religion, when exhibited in real life, without affectation and formality, especially on trying and difficult occasions, will give the world an idea and conviction of its excellence, which no description can attain ; and, without which, the most accurate description will appear no more than a display of ingenuity and art ; and the minister himself, a performer on the public stage, for his own reputation or advantage.

To this we may add, that a good example, in the conduct of a Minister, is likely to be accompanied with some particular advantages. From observation of the world, we shall find, that, in all the different societies, in which men are closely linked together, there is usually some leading influence, which forms the taste of the society, and gives it its peculiar character. This influence is usually acquired, by means of some distinguishing station and ability. The station of a Minister, and those offices of life, in which, by his profession, he is called to be employed, naturally tend to give him such an influence in that religious society, with which the Providence of God hath immediately connected him. As our blessed Lord expresses it, he is "*as a city set upon a hill,*" which "*cannot be hid.*" He acts his part under the inspection of the public eye ; therefore, his example is likely to have the more extensive influence : and, corrupted as the world is, there is still something respectable in the station of a Minister. If it is filled by him in a worthy manner, and,

with proper dignity and wisdom, it will hardly fail, to command, at least a secret veneration and respect ; and, to give him a peculiar direction of the sentiments and manners of the people committed to his charge.

Further, by maintaining such a walk and conversation as our text requires, a minister will exert himself, and employ the talents God has given him, to the best advantage in his power, for answering the ends of his profession. There is a certain point of perfection in every business of life, to which, every man, who acts in the genuine spirit of his profession, will endeavour to attain. Though the faithful minister of Christ puts no confidence in himself, or in any little abilities or improvements of his own, knowing that the success of all his labours must depend on God ; yet, from the nature of his profession, he knows it is his duty to perform the part which is assigned him, in the best manner he can ; and, in this way, to rely on that assistance which is promised in the Gospel. In every sacred ministration in which the teacher of religion is called to be employed, there is, undoubtedly, a certain method of performing it, which is the best, and most conducive to the end for which it was designed. In every religious instruction he is called to give, there is a certain point of light in which it should be placed, in order to do justice to it, and to convey it, with the best advantage, to the view and apprehension of his people ; as there must be a certain method of addressing it, by which it is the most likely to reach their hearts. There is, withal, among the various topics of religion suggested in the Gospel, a certain selection to be made, from time to time, which is best adapted to the circumstances of the people to whom they are addressed ; and which, in their particular situation, is the most likely to be accompanied with suitable effects. The judgment and ability of doing all this, is, I apprehend, the peculiar art of a Minister's profession ; and a principal part of that wisdom, of which the scripture speaks, by which he "*winneth souls.*" To arrive at this peculiar wisdom and ability, the faithful Minister of Christ, will dedicate the labour of his life ; and exert every talent God has given him, to the utmost of his power. To this he will

feel himself obliged,—that he may do justice to the character and commission which he bears, to that Divine Religion which he preaches to the world, and to the souls of men who are committed to his care. He sees, that the ends of his profession are of infinite importance to the happiness of men ; for, they are no less than, “ *to bring them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sin, and an inheritance among the Saints, by the faith that is in Jesus Christ.*” The feelings of humanity, cherished by the sense of his religion, will deeply interest him in the accomplishment of these designs ; and it would give him a singular affliction to believe, that these were obstructed in his hands, by any criminal omission, or misconduct of his own. Animated by the same great idea of the ends of his profession, he will reckon it his duty, to cultivate the faculties which God has given him ; and to be, every day, adding to the improvements he has made, as a teacher of the Gospel. He will hate a life of ignorance and sloth ; and retreat, as much as he decently can, from that insipid waste of time, in the frivolous conversation and amusements of the world, which are a hindrance to every valuable improvement. New fields of knowledge, essential to the sacred character, or conducive to its usefulness and dignity, will be ever opening to his view. Although he knows, that the gracious influence of God alone, can reach the consciences, or change the hearts of men, yet he also knows, that those peculiar qualifications which belong to his profession, are in their nature, fitted to accomplish these designs ; and that a Minister is most likely to obtain this gracious influence from God, when, with an humble dependence on it, he exerts and cultivates the talents God has given him to the utmost of his power : relying, therefore, upon God, it is, alike, the business and the pleasure of his life, to be adding, every day, to his improvements. The exhortation which the Apostle Paul gives to Timothy, he takes continually to himself : “ *Meditate upon these things ; give thyself wholly to them ; that thy profiting may appear to all.*” He will, withal perceive, that, to answer the ends of his office, an equal share of preparation and improve-

ment may be requisite, in every situation in which a Minister is placed, and in preaching, even to the lowest and the least discerning part of mankind. If the sole end of a Minister's profession were, merely to acquit himself to the approbation and acceptance of his people, to gratify their taste, or to excite some temporary emotions in their minds ;—to all this, in many situations, very small improvements might suffice :—nay, sometimes the meanest talents, and the most insipid and absurd performances, are, in this way, able to procure the highest popularity. But it is a very different thing, to persuade our people to resist their sinful passions, and amend the evil of their “ ways,—to turn them from darkness unto light, and from “ the power of Satan unto God.” Although no man, of himself, is “ sufficient for these things ;” yet, it is allowed by all, that there are certain qualifications and improvements belonging to the office of a Minister, by which he is prepared to be the instrument of God in accomplishing these designs : and, if this be acknowledged, it will, perhaps, be found to be a consequence, that, in order to promote them, an equal share of these qualifications may be requisite, in addressing the hearts of men, in every rank of life ;—for, in this way, it will be found, that their hearts are equally shut against the efficacy of the Gospel ; and, with equal difficulty, “ brought into “ subjection and captivity to Jesus Christ.” The conversion of a prince, or of a peasant, from their peculiar habits of iniquity, are, I believe, with equal difficulty, to be achieved.

The faithful Minister of Jesus, who, in the manner already stated, makes full proof of his Ministry, will also be prompted, with invariable constancy and fortitude, to declare unto his people, “ the whole counsel of God.” He will, faithfully, and fairly set before them, the whole extent of their religious and moral obligations, with all that minuteness and detail, with which they are delivered in the Sacred Scriptures ; and which, he sees, the circumstances of his people may require. No aversion which their ignorance, their prejudice, or their sinful passions may suggest on this account ;—no unpopular, injurious epithets, that may be given him, as a legal, or moral

preacher, will prevail upon him, either to conceal or to disguise, any part of that Divine Religion, upon which, with the deepest earnestness, he founds the prospect of his own salvation. He will, with all the diligence and candour of which he is capable, search the Holy Bible,—look for genuine religion there, and, from thence, rather than from any human system upon earth, learn what he is to teach, as a Minister of Christ.

Again : By maintaining such a walk and conversation as is implied in making full proof of his ministry, a Minister of the Gospel will be furnished with a peculiar talent of instruction, of great importance to the success of his ministry, of which he cannot otherwise be possessed. The great objects of religion, which the Apostle calls "*the things of God,*" cannot be perceived, in their proper light;—their dignity, importance, and extent, cannot be perceived, but by him who is upright and pure in heart. "*The natural man receives them not ;—neither can he know them ;—because they are spiritually discerned.*" Hence it is, that moral and religious obligations, and the laws of christian piety and virtue, when explained in their genuine and full extent, are usually regarded by the vicious part of mankind as empty fictions, which exist only in the fancy of recluse and visionary men ; and all pretensions to that piety and goodness which the Gospel has prescribed, are treated by them, either as delusion or hypocrisy. To this it was owing, that the Pharisees, who were covetous, derided the instructions of our Saviour, in which he enjoined the love of God, and the contempt of this present world. As the sentiments which he expressed were totally above the comprehension of their covetous and selfish minds ; and as they were sentiments to which they felt nothing correspondent in themselves ; they were treated by them as ridiculous and fanciful. To this also it was owing, that the piety and purity of life which the Apostles taught the Gentile world, and supported by the doctrine of a crucified Saviour, was, by the Greeks, at that time the most enlightened nation upon earth, disdainfully rejected, as absurdity and foolishness. The Apostle Paul gives this account of it. "*If the Gospel,*" said he "*be hid,*"—if its wisdom, its im-

portance, and its excellence be hid, "*it is hid to them, whose minds the God of this world hath blinded ;*"—whose moral and religious sense of things, has been darkened and debased by the impressions of this world. If this, now, be a just representation of the matter, the inference is obvious, that a teacher of religion, who has no experience of its purifying power upon himself, is not in possession of that peculiar talent of instruction, which belongs to his profession. Religion has not yet appeared to him in that light in which it is perceived, when it makes its way into the heart of man. In the language of the Apostle, God hath not "*shined into his heart, to give him the light of the knowledge of his Glory.*" Being destitute of this peculiar light, when he attempts to represent "*the things of God,*" he must do it from a light and knowledge which is not his own ; like a man who never saw, when, by the force of imitation, he describes the visible creation, without any just ideas of the things which he describes. — If religion were nothing more than a theory of speculative truth, to be seated in the heads of men, the moral and religious dispositions of its teachers, would not be of so much consequence : but the religion which a Minister of Christ is called to teach, is a practical and moral thing, the intention of which is to purify the heart of man ; and therefore, cannot be fully understood and taught, but by what the Apostle calls the spiritual discernment, or by that light of understanding, which is directed by the sentiments of a devout and honest heart. An accurate and extensive knowledge of the evidence and doctrines of religion, and a regular education, in various important parts of human learning, are indeed most desirable and important branches of ministerial furniture ; but these alone, are not sufficient, to qualify the teacher of religion. In the fine arts, it is not by studied rules, or by critical remarks,—at least, it is not by these alone, that one is qualified to perceive their peculiar excellence, or to feel those delicate enjoyments, they are fitted to communicate. To the knowledge of the rules of art, there must be joined that internal sense of beauty, which is called taste ; and that peculiar sensibility which is originally planted by the author of our nature, and is cul-

tivated by acquaintance with the best examples of the kind. Thus too, it is, in the holy and divine art of life itself.

To all this we may add, that this internal preparation of the heart, is what alone will enable the teacher of religion, to attain that natural, simple, and persuasive eloquence, with which the Gospel should be taught. In every kind of composition or discourse, genuine and real eloquence, is the language of the heart ;—or the natural expression of those sentiments and feelings, which the subject on which it is employed, is fitted to inspire ; and, the immediate effect of it is, to leave the minds of those, to whom it is addressed, filled with that same idea and impression, which the author had conceived and felt within himself. Hence, it follows, that the great objects of religion must be previously seen and felt in their genuine dignity and moment, e're they can be represented with that natural and simple eloquence, which is fitted to enlighten and affect the heart. In this natural and interesting manner, was the christian religion first revealed. In the Gospel, as it lies before us, in the discourses of our blessed Lord, we meet with nothing of that *laboured* eloquence, which is the mark of human art; and tends rather to excite a vain applause and admiration of the art itself, than a serious impression of the things themselves, which it is designed to represent:—nor do we find here, that *laboured* artificial arrangement, of speculative truths, in which the wisdom and philosophy of man display themselves. Jesus was, in this respect, a singular instructor ; and it is not difficult to see the cause. He did not give his Gospel to the world, as a curiously investigated theory,—the work of genius and art ;—but as a doctrine which he had from God ; and which proceeded immediately from the dictates of that grace and truth, with which he was inspired. The holy laws of life which he prescribed,—the Heavenly sentiments of wisdom which he studied to imprint upon the hearts of men, he copied from the virtues of his own heart, as their purest and most beautiful originals. On this account, a man of a discerning and unbiassed mind, will be able to perceive a considerable difference between the gospel, as it lies before us in its native

and original simplicity, and those descriptions of it, that are given in those laboured and artificial forms, into which it has been modelled by the hand of man :—a difference not very unlike that which is to be found, in all the other works of God and man. The works of God are solemn and majestic; and, by their inexpressible grandeur and simplicity, enlarge and elevate the heart: the works of men, though modelled by the nicest art and skill, are but little and diminutive; and, how much soever they may amuse the fancy, seldom raise any great or elevating emotions in the heart. For this reason, it might at least deserve inquiry, if it would not better serve the original intentions of the Gospel, to represent it to the world, as nearly as possible, in that artless and divine simplicity, in which it was delivered by its blessed and divine author, rather than as a laboured theory of speculative truths, curiously distinguished and arranged, according to the rules of human art.

But there is one other light, in which I would further set before you, the importance of maintaining such a walk and conversation as will afford scriptural evidence, that a Minister of Christ makes full proof of his ministry; and that is, *in the view of that comfort and advantage, which it will afford himself.* The happiness of every situation, arises, chiefly, from the hopes and prospects which it opens to the minds of men. It is a constant succession and variety of these, which constitutes the charm of human industry, in every sphere of life. But that Minister who is not, himself, governed by the power of religion, must be totally cut off from this fountain of enjoyment. The duties of his office must become a tedious and insipid round of insignificant employments, to which, no animating hope or prospect is annexed, especially in a church, where there is so very little, to favour the projects, either of ambition, or of avarice. To this we may add, that, in order to preserve the decorum of his character, he must often put himself to a painful and unnatural restraint; and be forced to a severity of manners, which he secretly contemns. But, he who is disposed, from the piety and goodness of his heart, to do the duties of his office, will draw from them, the highest satisfaction and delight.

They are immediately suited to the taste and temper of his mind ; and suggest the most interesting and enlivening prospect upon earth ;—no less than that of being a fellow worker with Almighty God, and the blessed Jesus, in promoting the immortal happiness of men. Hence, the Apostle Paul expresses so much pleasure, in the thought of executing the commission which was given him.—

“None of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the Gospel of the grace of God.”

I might further observe, that the temper and character, which in this discourse I have endeavoured to describe to you, will best enable a Minister to overcome the difficulties and discouragements he may meet with, in the course of his ministry, or to bear them with tranquility. Difficulties and discouragements, of various kinds, are scarcely to be avoided, in the office of the ministry. Licentiousness and infidelity create aversion to the character of a faithful minister of Christ ; and dispose the vicious part of mankind, to depreciate or oppose it. Unreasonable prejudices, likewise, may arise against a minister himself, from the ignorance and folly of his people. Nothing, however, will so effectually tend to soften and remove these prejudices, and change aversion into friendship and esteem, as that faithful, upright character, which I have endeavoured to describe to you :—Or, if this cannot be done, as possibly may be the case, with some persons of a dark, sullen, and suspicious nature, or of a haughty unrelenting heart, yet, in spite of every prejudice, a noble tranquility will be enjoyed by the faithful minister of Christ. The approbation of his own heart, a sense of merited esteem, and confidence in the master whom he serves, will disarm the power of ignorance, of prejudice, and of enmity, and give him an enjoyment of himself, which they will not be able to disturb. With the Apostle Paul, this is his rejoicing, *“the testimony of his conscience, that, in simplicity and godly sincerity, not with fleshly wisdom, but by the grace of God, he has his conversation in the world.”*

I might here add, that the preparation of the heart on

which I have already insisted, is what alone will enable the Minister of Christ, to maintain a steadiness and uniformity of conduct, in every circumstance of life. Yes Brethren : the sincere and faithful minister of Christ, aided by the master whom he serves, will feel an independency and strength of mind, and a security and comfort from himself, that will render him superior to every temptation, with which the world can assail him. Guided by the dictates of an honest heart, he is uniform throughout, and consistent with himself, in every part of life. While he gives no just occasion of complaint, he nevertheless, in doing what his conscience or his judgment prescribes, is indifferent about the ignorant and uncharitable censures of the world ; knowing, that, if he sought to please men, at the expense of his integrity, “ he could not be a servant of Jesus Christ.”

But the highest, and most peculiar happiness and satisfaction, which the sincere and faithful minister of Christ must feel, in the duties of his ministry, arises from the prospect of that glorious reward, which the master whom he serves, has promised to bestow upon his faithful servants : for, he knows, that, “ *when the chief Shepherd shall appear, he shall receive a crown of glory, that fadeth not away.*”

To conclude :—There is a special circumstance attending the profession of a minister, which adds greatly to the weight of his peculiar obligations ; to-wit, that the same qualifications which fit him for the duties of his office, will add to the goodness of his private character ; and fit him for being a better and a worthier man in every circumstance of life. In a different situation, a man may be distinguished in the sphere of his profession, while his character, in other circumstances of life, is but indifferent : but, in order to be eminent and useful in the sacred character, a man must be eminently wise and virtuous, in every instance of his conduct : and, by the same means by which he studies to promote the everlasting interests of other men, he most effectually secures his own. Hence, that important admonition, which the Apostle Paul gives to Timothy ;—“ *Take heed unto thyself, and to thy doctrine ; continue in them ; for, in doing this, thou shalt both save thyself and them that hear thee.*”

THE
CHARGE
TO THE
MINISTER.

Reverend, and Dear Brother,

With great propriety, on the present occasion, you may be addressed in the language, in which the Almighty once spake to his servant, Moses : *Put off thy shoes from off thy feet ; for the place whereon thou standest, is HOLY GROUND.*” Yes ; my brother : You do indeed stand on “ *holy ground.*” The office, into which you are inducted, is an *holy* office : The master, to whom you have sworn allegiance, is a *holy* master : The Gospel, which you are called to preach, is a *holy* Gospel : The life, which you are required to recommend to others, is a *holy* life : The example, you are required to exhibit, is a *holy* example : The ordinances, you are to administer, are *holy* ordinances : In short, all the duties, you are called to discharge, are *holy* duties. Of these truths, I trust you are deeply sensible ; nor can you be otherwise than feelingly alive to the natural and obvious inference to be drawn from them ; namely, that an office, thus *holy*, cannot be rightly exercised, but by those who possess *holy* qualifications.

What an awfully responsible office, is that of AN AMBASSADOR FOR CHRIST ! What prudence, what knowledge, what piety, what prayer, what self-denial, what Heavenly mindedness, what Heavenly conversation, what holiness of life, what meekness, and lowliness of mind, what zeal and diligence, what intense love to his people, what sympathy and sensibility of soul, what fidelity, what solicitude about the success of his labours, what attention to the va-

rious daily duties of his function, and to those which appertain to domestic devotion, should mark that man's character, who enters into this sacred office ! When you take this view of your situation, are you not constrained to exclaim, with the great Apostle of the Gentiles, "*Who is sufficient for these things ?*" Yes ; my dear brother : if the Apostle Paul, whose gifts and graces were so eminent,—who was caught up to the third Heaven,—who heard the voice of God, and saw the vision of the Almighty,—who performed so many signs, and wonders, and mighty deeds,—who was not a whit behind the highest of the Apostles,—who was honoured as the instrument of planting so many churches, and of converting so many souls :—if he felt such a deep sense of his own insufficiency, on the contemplation of the greatness of the work to which he was called,—well may I,—well may you,—well may my Reverend Fathers and Brethren now present ;—yea, well may all those who have undertaken the great work of the Gospel Ministry, reiterate the exclamation, "*Who is sufficient for these things ?*"—But, our grand consolation is,—a consolation, in which, I trust, you will experience an enlarged share,—that *our sufficiency is of God*. This consolation supported the Ministering servants of Christ, in all ages of his church ; and you too, my brother, may place on this, the utmost reliance ; for, "*Lo !*" said our Divine Master, "*I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world.*" Let this, then, be your encouragement, to persevere in the various duties of your arduous calling. Let it serve to excite your diligence, to awaken your zeal, to strengthen your graces, and to animate your devotion. I am very sensible, that no minister of the Gospel stands more in need of admonition and exhortation,—that no one stands more in need of being stirred up and aroused to the lively exercise of those graces and virtues which are essential to the sacred office, than I do myself :—and, therefore, whilst yielding to the injunction of my Reverend Fathers and Brethren, who have assigned me the duty I am now endeavouring to discharge,—whilst, conscious that it is our united duty, to "*admonish one another,*" and "*to provoke unto love and to good works,*" I remind you of the

sacredness of your office, the awful responsibility attached to it, the indispensable necessity of unreserved fidelity and unwearied diligence in every part of your duty,—and the awful consequences of being faithless, negligent, or unconcerned ;—whilst I endeavour to give *you* a lively representation of these things, I would, at the same time, most earnestly desire, that their weight, their importance, and their solemnity, might be suitably impressed *on my own heart*. Suffer, then, my dear Brother, the word of exhortation ;—that, having your own mind deeply impressed with Divine things, you may, with the more authority, and consequently, with the greater zeal and earnestness, exhort others to holiness of life.

Let Christ Jesus, and him crucified, be the main foundation, the sum and substance of all your preaching. Like Paul, be determined, to know nothing among those to whom you minister ; but Christ Jesus, and him crucified. Remember, that he is “ *the end of the law for righteousness, to every one that believeth.*” By leaving him out of your discourses, you may, indeed, gain the applause of the men of the world :—you may acquire the reputation of being an eloquent man, among those who practically say, of the Redeemer of Israel, “ *We will not have this man to reign over us :*” but, those who are hungering after the bread, and thirsting after the waters of life, you will send empty away : To them, any instruction which speaks not of him, who is “ *the way, the truth, and the life,*” will be empty, insipid, and unsatisfactory.—“ *Christ crucified,*” is indeed “ *to the Jews a stumbling-block, and to the Greeks foolishness ;*” but, to “ *those who are called, he is the wisdom of God, and the power of God to salvation.*”

Be faithful, in declaring the whole counsel of God.—Keep nothing back. Let it be to you “ *a small thing, to be judged of man’s judgment.*” Beware of being influenced by the fear of man ; but, with undaunted firmness, plead boldly, the cause of your redeemer : And, let me beseech you, never loose sight of this solemn truth ;—that the Gospel you preach, will be, both to yourself, and to all those who hear you, “ *either a savour of life unto life, or a savour of death unto death.*”

Read much ;—study much ;—pray frequently, fervently, and importunately ; and make it the sole business of your life, to promote God's glory, in the salvation of sinners. Cultivate, with prayerful care, that temper of mind, which will irresistably incline you to say, with the inspired Apostle, "*Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they may be saved.*"

Although we all believe, and are fully persuaded, that you have not deliberately resolved to enter upon the sacred office, without sitting down, and counting the cost ; yet, on this occasion, it would betray a want of fidelity, truly reprehensible, not to forewarn you, that, in the exercise of the various duties, to which, in the course of your ministry, you will be called, if you are faithful to your trust, you may expect to meet with many difficulties, trials, and afflictions ; and even to encounter much opposition and persecution. To meet these, with that resolute firmness which becomes a Minister of Christ, your faith must be strong ; and your reliance unshaken on that master, in whose service you are engaged, who has promised, that, "*as thy day, so shall thy strength be ;*" and who has graciously said, "*My grace is sufficient for thee ; for my strength is made perfect in thy weakness ;—I will never leave thee nor forsake thee.*"

As a high sense of the sacredness of your office, will excite your diligence in improving your own Ministerial qualifications ; so, when God, in his Providence, calls you to act in his judicatory, to judge of the propriety of entrusting to others, "*the keys of the Kingdom of Heaven,*" it will be necessary for you to exercise much care and caution, lest any novice,—any unskilful or unqualified person, should intrude himself into the sacred office. Inattention to this duty, in the Judicatories of Christ's Church, will not fail to be productive of consequences the most ruinous to the interests of Zion. "*Lay hands suddenly on no man,*" is an Apostolic injunction on this subject, which ought never to be lost sight of, by a faithful Ministry.

In the discharge of every duty, whether of a public or private nature, keep your mind fixed on the General Judgment. Of that awful period, never lose sight : so

shall you be the better prepared to give up your account with joy, when he who has put you into the ministry, will call you to give an account of your stewardship.

But, as the hints contained in the discourse you have just heard, must be fresh in your recollection, it is not necessary to multiply advices. For further instruction, I must refer you to the word of God, which, I trust, will be your constant companion ; and especially to those excellent Epistles of the Apostle Paul to Timothy and Titus, which you cannot too frequently read ; and to a few passages from which, I will call your attention, e're I close this address. *“ For therefore”* said the inspired Apostle, *“ we both labour and suffer reproach, because we trust in the living God, who is the Saviour of all men, specially of those that believe. Let no man despise thy youth ; but be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity. Give attendance to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine. Take heed unto thyself and unto thy doctrine ; continue in them : for in doing this, thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee. I charge thee before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, and the elect angels, that thou observe these things, without preferring one before another, doing nothing by partiality. Lay hands suddenly on no man, neither be partaker of other men’s sins : keep thyself pure. For the love of money is the root of all evil : which, while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows. But thou, O man of God, flee these things ; and follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness. Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, whereunto thou art also called, and hast professed a good profession before many witnesses. I give thee charge in the sight of God, who quickeneth all things, and before Christ Jesus, who before Pontius Pilate witnessed a good confession ; that thou keep this commandment, without spot, unrebukeable, until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ. Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth. But shun profane and vain babblings ; for they will increase unto more*

“ ungodliness. And the servant of the Lord must not
 “ strive ; but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient,
 “ in meekness instructing those that oppose themselves ; if
 “ God peradventure will give them repentance to the ac-
 “ knowledging of the truth ; and that they may recover them-
 “ selves out of the snare of the Devil, who are taken captive
 “ by him at his will. I charge thee, therefore, before God,
 “ and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and
 “ the dead at his appearing and his kingdom ; Preach
 “ the word ; be instant in season and out of season ; reprove,
 “ rebuke, exhort, with all long-suffering and doctrine.—
 “ Watch thou in all things, endure afflictions, do the work
 “ of an evangelist, make full proof of thy Ministry. Speak
 “ thou the things which become sound doctrine : in all things
 “ shewing thyself a pattern of good works : in doctrine,
 “ shewing uncorruptness, gravity, sincerity, sound speech,
 “ that cannot be condemned ; that he that is of the contrary
 “ part may be ashamed, having no evil thing to say of you.
 “ Let no man despise thee.”

And now, my dear Brother, with these Apostolic pre-
 cepts, I dismiss you ; “ commending you to God, and to
 “ the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and
 “ to give you an inheritance among all them that are sancti-
 “ fied.”

THE
CHARGE
TO THE
PEOPLE.

To the people of this congregation, I am now to offer a few hints, suggested by a review of this day's solemnities.

My Dear Brethren,

You have heard the charge, which has just been given to your minister ; and, I trust, many of you are suitably impressed with a sense of the importance of that relation, which, on this day, has taken place, between you and him. That his duties are sacred and important; and involving, both to you and to him, eternal consequences, you will all be ready to acknowledge. But, it is necessary to remind you, that, of you also, there are duties required ;—duties which are strongly binding on you ; and, the faithful discharge of which, are necessary to the success of his labours, and to the efficacy of his ministry. The more solemn and important the duties of a Gospel Minister are, the more needful it is, that he should meet with suitable encouragement ; and that his hands should be held up and supported, by the people to whom he ministers, in holy things.

To this end, it is absolutely essential, that in the first place, you give a regular and constant attendance, to his public instructions. When the house of God is deserted; when his public worship is neglected, and his ordinances treated with contempt, God's gracious design, in sending his only begotten son into this world, to save lost sinners ; and in instituting a Gospel Ministry, for the pur-

pose of publishing the glad tidings of salvation, is impiously defeated. Let not, then, this aggravated sin lie at your door. Do not, thus, trample under foot, the son of God, or put him to an open shame. Do not, thus, practically say, that you have neither part nor lot in the great salvation, which the blessed Immanuel purchased with his precious blood ; but, on the contrary, exhibit to the world, a convincing proof of your gratitude to the great head of the church, for instituting the ministry of reconciliation, and sending his servant, to “ *beseech you in his stead, to be reconciled to God :*”—for this signal manifestation of his loving kindness, do you, my brethren, testify your gratitude, by a constant, faithful, and devout attendance, on the preached word ; and on all the Ordinances of God’s house.

But, in order to hold up your Minister’s hands, and to afford him suitable encouragement in his labour of love, it is not only necessary, that you should give his public ministrations a regular *personal* attendance ; but, that you should also, listen with attention, to the truths he delivers ; feel your own deep interest in them ; and faithfully apply them to your respective cases and circumstances. Remember, that the Gospel he preaches, is not designed for your entertainment or amusement ; but to promote the Glory of God, who will, most assuredly, be magnified in those that perish, as well as admired in those that are saved ; and that, if you fail to improve the instructions of the Gospel, those very instructions will rise up in judgment against you, and condemn you. Either everlasting salvation, or eternal condemnation, will be the sure consequence of your having heard the messages of the Gospel ; and should you finally be found to be unprofitable hearers of the word, it will greatly add to your condemnation, “ *that light is come into the world, and that you loved darkness rather than light, because your deeds were evil.*” I beseech you, then, Brethren, lay this deeply to heart. Do not subject your Minister to the painful apprehension, of seeing any of you, at the left hand of the judge of all the earth, at the last day. Do not, thus, requite his labours of love among you ;—but so improve the Gospel message which you receive from him,

that ye may all be happy seals to his Ministry ; and prove his crown of rejoicing in the day of the Lord.

It is further necessary, that your conduct towards your Minister should be such, as to encourage him, to deal fairly and impartially with you, in declaring unto you, the whole counsel of God. Without this, even did he display the learning of a Paul, or the eloquence of an Apollos, his preaching will be wholly useless to you. Let no consideration whatever, tempt you to reject the truth, how much soever, it may condemn your life, or reprove your conduct. Beware of falling into the error into which some of the Galatian Christians once fell, when they esteemed the Apostle Paul their enemy, because he told them the truth ; but rather esteem your minister as your truest friend, when he faithfully warns you of your danger. Should you hear him utter truths harsh to fastidious ears, or offensive to licentious prejudices, let this excite your gratitude rather than your resentment ; and, if you regard your own vital and essential interests, you will make a serious application of them to yourselves : but, as for your minister who delivers them, be very careful, that you neither discourage nor deter him from the faithful discharge of his duty ; for, he has, this day, solemnly engaged, that, whether men will hear, or whether they will forbear, he, for his part, will not fail to declare, the whole counsel of God.

It likewise demands your consideration, that the Ministers of the Gospel are men of like passions with yourselves ; and therefore liable to those infirmities, which necessarily proceed from the indwelling corruption of the human heart. Be candid, therefore, towards your Minister ; and expect not from him, absolute perfection. This, indeed, is not, even by the very best among us, attainable in this life ; but, as your Minister is a young man, and just entering upon his arduous duties ;—it is your duty to make allowances for many short-comings in him, which must necessarily flow from inexperience ; and which more advanced years in the exercise of the ministry, should the Lord prolong his days, may enable him to surmount. Mistake me not here, Brethren : I do not say this, with a view to extenuate any material er-

ror in point of conduct, or to excuse any essential failure, in point of duty, in your Pastor. On this subject, I humbly trust, you will have no cause to complain. But, being young in the Ministry myself, I know, from experience, that a youthful ministry stands in need of much tenderness, and forbearance.

To these hints, I shall only add, what, I trust, your own hearts have previously suggested. Let your importunate supplications frequently ascend to the throne of grace, on behalf of your Minister, that his labours of love among you may be abundantly successful. Remember, that, although a learned Paul may plant, and an eloquent Apollos may water, it is God only that giveth the increase. To that God, then, do you look, for a blessing upon the labours of your Minister. To him, frequently apply; pleading the atoning merits of the Lord Jesus Christ; and, casting yourselves, unreservedly, on his sovereign mercy. May he take you into his holy keeping. May he make you all, subjects of his grace, and heirs of his everlasting kingdom: And his shall be all the glory, both now and evermore. *Amen.*

FINIS.